

# **DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation announces cap reached on sale of Delaware surf-fishing permits**

**DOVER** – DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation announced today that it has reached its cap of 17,000 Delaware surf-fishing permits, as voted on this year by the state's Parks and Recreation Advisory Council. With the cap figure attained, no more surf tag permits will be issued until December.

While surf-fishing permit sales have ended, the Division of Parks & Recreation notes that there are no restrictions for non-vehicle, walk-on fishing, as long as an angler has [a Delaware fishing license](#) issued by DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife.

In January, Delaware's Parks and Recreation Advisory Council, an 11-member board appointed by the Governor that advises DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, voted to limit the number of permits issued annually to no more than 17,000, and to raise surf fishing permit fees. Both decisions were made at a regularly-scheduled council meeting Jan. 17, at which the council received written and oral comments from more than 100 members of the public.

Division of Parks & Recreation statistics show that the issuing of surf-fishing permits has increased at a rate of seven percent annually from 2011 to 2017. The Division implemented a first-come, first-served cap on the number of permits issued as the most equitable way to serve all beach users, to manage a limited resource, and to protect against overcrowding of parks beaches. The Division also has found that limiting the number of permits enables more efficient

management of the state's surf-fishing program. This plan also aligns with DNREC's priority to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all visitors to Delaware's award-winning state parks system.

At the January meeting, DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation reported a three-fold increase over the last year for violations of the "actively-engaged in surf fishing" rule enforced by DNREC Natural Resources Police Park Rangers. In response, the General Assembly added funding in the FY 2020 operating budget for two new Park Rangers, one each at Cape Henlopen and Delaware Seashore state parks. In addition, Parks Rangers' workweeks have expanded from 37.5 to 40 hours, creating 1,000 hours of additional coverage annually for the coastal parks. The "actively-engaged" rule continues to be a priority area for targeted enforcement.

In response to complaints of visitors failing to abide by regulations, on Saturday, June 15, and Sunday, June 16, DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation's Park Rangers conducted [the first of several targeted enforcement operations](#) planned to take place this summer.

Rangers, assisted by Park Watch volunteers, conducted surf-fishing compliance checks at four crossings within Cape Henlopen and Fenwick Island State Parks. Vehicles were checked for compliance with Delaware's surf-fishing regulations. More than 300 vehicles were checked.

At Fenwick Island State Park, Rangers and officers from DNREC's Fish & Wildlife Natural Resources Police checked every vehicle on the surf-fishing beach to ensure at least one occupant was actively-engaged in surf fishing. This targeted enforcement operation resulted in 24 citations and warnings for various violations of surf-fishing regulations, including anglers not possessing required fishing and vehicle equipment.

Park Rangers remind surf-fishing permit holders that all

individuals who drive on designated surf-fishing beaches must possess a valid surf-fishing vehicle permit; including a jack, shovel, low-pressure tire gauge, board, and tow strap; and also must possess proper saltwater fishing tackle.

More information on the surf fishing cap is available at [www.destateparks.com/Adventures/Fishing](http://www.destateparks.com/Adventures/Fishing) or by calling 302-739-9200.

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